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Omaha Public School District
Board of Education
3215 Cuming Street
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Members of the Board of Education:

I have recently been offered an opportunity with a new company. After much consideration I have decided to accept the offer. This opportunity is very exciting and clearly a great opportunity for advancing my career. However, the demands of the position has confirmed in my mind that I will not be able to effectively perform my duties as a Board of Education member while at the same time performing as required for my new position.

Having said that, I have given considerable thought to my positions both as a public official and new employee. In order to be fair to myself, my family, District 2 residents, and the District, I feel it appropriate to step down as a member of the Omaha Public Schools Board of Education. This will allow the Board adequate time to fill the position as quickly as possible and to entertain applicants. In making the decision at this time I would note, and have considered, that to resign now will allow the position to be filled by appointment and without the need for a special election. Given that the Board's work at this time is especially sensitive and significant, especially with respect to transitioning to a new superintendent, looming across the board cuts (sequestration) to education funding at the Federal level, failure of the State to restore education funding levels as promised, opening Alfonza W. Davis Middle and Gateway Elementary Schools, and other academic development initiatives, it makes abundant sense to make the transition process as smooth as possible.

I am especially proud of the following accomplishments of the Board of Education under my time as a school board member which includes the following highlights:

Academic Achievement:

- Continued increased Graduations Rates and decreased Dropout Rates across all demographics
- State data demonstrates students "growth and gains" are in the top quarter of all Nebraska school districts
- Expansion of Early Childhood Education opportunities
- Establishment of district wide instructional framework, Action Plan, with professional development to support plan
- Expansion of Summer School options
- Expanded pathways to graduation

- Expanded choice for students and families with addition of Focus Schools/Programs, Central High School receiving International Baccalaureate Programme (IBP) Accreditation, Lewis & Clark Middle School receiving International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programme (IBP) Accreditation
- Expansion of Career Education and Dual Credit opportunities

Collaborations

- Community engagement in Superintendent search
- Expansion of Career Education programs and partnerships with new business partners and private and public post-secondary education institutions
- Launched School Based Health Centers with Building Bright Futures, Charles Drew and One World Health Centers
- Increased investment in technology
- Established State's first Focus School with Westside and Elkhorn Public Schools
- Work with members of the Legislature to change Focus School/Program provisions
- Before and Afterschool/Academic Programs with Learning Community Coordinating Council, Mayor's office, Sherwood Foundation and Building Bright Futures
- Worked with Senator Council and the Douglas County Attorney's Office to revise policy pertaining to allegations of sexual assault. Even though the Legislature failed to pass Senator Council's bill (LB 839) which was crafted to clarify reporting requirements, the Board did adopt the language of the bill.
- Enhanced working relationships and communications with other Metro area boards of education

Governance

- Developed Superintendent and Interim Superintendent Search process
- Hired Interim Superintendent
- Completed Superintendent Search
- Simplification of the Superintendent's contract
- Revised policy to assure all employment contracts and agreements are on file, reviewed annually by the Board and made public
- Revised policy to ensure retirement packages be calculated as accrued liability on financial statements and budget development
- Developed and facilitated forums and tours to discuss and receive input regarding academic achievement from the Governor, representatives of the Chamber of Commerce, State Legislators, Mayor's office, philanthropic community, business community, elected officials, parents and other community members

- Implemented podcasting of committee meetings, board meetings and special meetings
- Reorganization of Central Office staff to ensure critical functions are covered and led efficiently and effectively
- Management Audits (Family and Community Engagement, Transportation, Communications, Compensation and Benefits, Development Department Goals and Objectives, Management Study of the Role of Legal Counsel, etc.)
- Program Audits (Curriculum, Psychologists Services, Board and Department policy revisions, etc.)
- Comprehensive review and update of district policies
- Established goals for Interim Superintendent
- Developed workshops with Nebraska Association of School Boards and the Council of Great City Schools designed specifically for this district
- Updated new board member orientation

One of my intentions in resigning at this point in time is to allow the board to continue to concentrate on some of our initiatives that still need to be completed. I am confident in this Board's ability to appoint someone who will successfully assist in achieving these objectives.

In conclusion, I would like to thank the students and families, staff of the Omaha Public Schools District, Interim Superintendent Virginia Moon, my fellow Board Members, and my many supporters for their camaraderie, assistance and cooperation throughout my term and especially during this past year.

I have sincerely enjoyed my time in public service and am humbled by the placement of this public trust in my hands by the citizens of District 2. I do expect to stay actively involved in the future, however this time it will again be as a concerned, interested, member of the public, but not as an elected official.

Please note the effective date of my resignation shall be today January 22, 2013.

Sincerely,



Freddie J. Gray
President Board of Education